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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/920,651	08/03/2001	Yoshikazu Hara	24740	6049

7590 11/20/2003

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Washington, DC 20005

EXAMINER

CULLER, JILL E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2854

DATE MAILED: 11/20/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application N .

09/920,651

Applicant(s)

HARA, YOSHIKAZU

Examiner

Jill E. Culler

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04 March 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 3 is objected to because of the following informalities:

On line 8, it appears that the word "ones" should be "one".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1 and 4-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,671,670 to Takahashi et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,911,527 to Aruga et al.

Takahashi et al. shows a stencil printing machine comprising a plurality of printing drums, 10, adapted to be selectively one of in press contact and out of contact with a common pressure drum, each printing drum being adapted to print on a same print paper, see column 8, lines 33-35 and Figs. 3 and 4.

Takahashi et al. does not teach a control section controlling a stencil printing process such that, even if one of the printing drums not being used in the current stencil printing process is in an error state, the stencil printing process is performed by other printing drums.

Aruga et al. teaches a printing machine with a plurality of printing mechanisms, and a control section controlling a printing process such that, when one printing mechanism is in an error state, the printing is carried out using the other printing mechanism.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to apply the control system of Aruga et al. to the stencil printing machine of Takahashi et al. so that printing could be carried out more efficiently when an unused printing drum is in an error state.

4. Claims 2-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi et al. in view of Aruga et al. as applied to claims 1 and 4-5 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,095,040 to Ashikagaya et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,713,274 to Kawai et al., and U.S. Patent No. 5,537,920 to Hasegawa et al.

Takahashi et al. and Aruga et al. teach all that is claimed, as in the above rejection of claims 1 and 4-5 above. Hasegawa also teaches an ink level detector to determine whether the ink reservoir is filled. See column 5, lines 50-54.

Takahashi et al. and Aruga et al. do not teach a printing drum absence detection section, a discharged stencil sheet box absence detection section, a discharged stencil sheet box full detection section, an ink container detection section, or an ink sensor section detecting whether or not an ink is filled in the corresponding ink container in the printing drum, wherein the control section controls the stencil printing process based on detection results of these detection sections. Takahashi et al. and Aruga et al. also do

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not teach an operation panel displaying error information and through which a user selects one or more of the printing drums to be used in the stencil printing process and initiates the stencil printing process, wherein the operation panel displays the following error states for each printing drum: no printing drum is mounted, no ink container is mounted, ink container is empty, no discharged stencil sheet box is mounted, and discharged stencil sheet box is filled with discharged stencil sheets.

Ashikagaya et al. teaches a stencil printing machine having a printing drum absence detection section comprising a detector, 38, detecting whether or not the printing drum, 140, is mounted in the stencil printing machine. See column 10, lines 40-43. Ashikagaya et al. also teaches an operation and display panel, 40, displaying error information and through which the stencil printing process can be controlled. See column 6, lines 14-18 and column 12, line 66 through column 14, line 10

Kawai et al. teaches a stencil printing machine having a discharged stencil sheet box absence detection section comprising a detector to determine whether or not the discharged stencil sheet box, 40, is mounted in the printing drum, see column 9, lines 55-59, and a discharged stencil sheet box full detection section comprising a detector, 38, to determine whether or not the discharged stencil sheet box, 40, is filled with used stencil sheets. See column 12, lines 59-63.

Hasegawa et al. teaches a stencil printing machine having an ink container detection section comprising a detector, 47, detecting whether or not the ink container, 17, is mounted in the printing drum, see column 4, lines 51-53, and an ink sensor

section, 49, detecting whether or not an ink is filled in the corresponding ink container in the printing drum. See column 4, lines 53-54.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to further modify the invention of Takahashi et al., as modified by Aruga et al., using the sensors and operation panel of Ashikagaya et al., Kawai et al., and Hasegawa et al. in order to more effectively control the stencil printing process.

5. Claims 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,129,013 to Takasawa et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,911,527 to Aruga et al.

Takasawa et al. teaches a stencil printing machine comprising a plurality of printing drums, 3A, 3B, see column 21, lines 64-67, a control section, 170, controlling a stencil printing process, see column 24, lines 56-58, and an operation panel, 70A, displaying error information, see column 25, lines 1-3, and through which a user selects one or more printing drums to be used in the stencil printing process, see column 25, lines 4-9, and initiates the stencil printing process. See column 24, line 63.

Takasawa et al. does not teach the control section controlling such that, even if one of the printing drums not being used in the current stencil printing process is in an error state, the stencil printing process is performed by other printing drums.

Aruga et al. teaches a printing machine with a plurality of printing mechanisms, and a control section controlling a printing process such that, when one printing

mechanism is in an error state, the printing is carried out using the other printing mechanism.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to apply the control system of Aruga et al. to the stencil printing machine of Takasawa et al. so that printing could be carried out more efficiently when an unused printing drum is in an error state.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-5 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. U.S. Patent No. 6,345,573 to Motoe et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,374,730 to Kuratani et al., and U.S. Patent No. 6,631,674 to Hara et al., each teach stencil printing machines having obvious similarities to the claimed subject matter.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jill E. Culler whose telephone number is (703) 308-1413. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 7:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Hirshfeld can be reached on (703) 305-6619. The fax phone

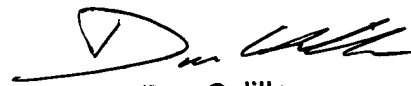
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number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 308-7722.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1782.

jec

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Colilla', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dan Colilla
Primary Examiner
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